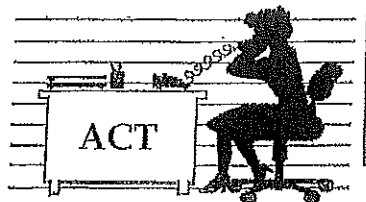


THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT '76 OF

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From The President's Desk

EARLY BIRD CONTRACT FINALLY RATIFIED

On June 24, 2015, the ACT membership voted approval of a one-year contract. For 2015-2016, the language of the Labor-Management Agreement remains the same except for the improvements listed on page 3.

As you are all aware, the members unanimously rejected the first final proposal of the Secondary School System on May 27th, mainly because there was no raise left after the medical premium increases.

Once the contract was rejected, ACT began preparations for negotiations on the full Labor-Management Agreement that we expected to be on-going throughout the summer. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Association and the System stated that if no agreement was reached by June 1, the parties were to present proposals to each other on all articles and sections of the contract by June 2. ACT's proposals reached the Secretary for Catholic Education by the deadline. However, no proposals were ever received from the System.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

On June 5, the Secretary for Catholic Education expressed interest in continuing with the Early Bird format, to see if an agreement could be reached by the end of the school year. If none was arrived at, both parties would then begin negotiating the full contract.

The Association and the System met on Monday, June 8, Wednesday, June 10 and Thursday, June 11. At 1:32 A.M. on June 12, a tentative agreement was reached.

While we had all hoped that the new Labor-Management Agreement would be multi-year, this will need to wait until there is a better read on medical insurance, especially the rolling out of the Affordable Care Act.

The ACT Membership voted 3 to 1 in favor of the new contract. As soon as the Agreement is signed by both parties, a copy will be sent to each teacher.

I would like to thank the members of the Association's Negotiating Team, Irene Tori, John Zoccola, Joe Schuler and Tom Imburgia, for their strength and determination. I also thank you, the members, for your support. As I have said before, a strong membership is our key to success.

I wish you all a happy and relaxing summer.



The ACT Negotiating Team:
Standing are Tom Imburgia
(O'Hara), John Zoccola (Wood),
and Joe Schuler (Conwell-Egan).

Seated are Irene Tori (ACT Staff,
Vice President) and Rita Schwartz
(ACT Staff, President).

**CONTRACT CHANGES
2015-2016**

ARTICLE X *Extracurricular Activities*

- 4. Moderators' Stipends
 2015-2016 school year--\$2,125/\$2,325

- 4a. Uncompensated extracurricular activities
 2015-2016 school year--\$800

TERM OF AGREEMENT 1 year

ARTICLE XIII *Fringe Benefits*

- 1. Personal Choice and Keystone HMO Plans
 Self-insured
 Annual Deductible--\$100/\$200 (Personal Choice only)
 Out-of-Pocket Maximum--\$2,500/\$5,000 (both plans)

- 1b. Effective November 1, 2015, teacher contributions:
 15% Personal Choice
 12% HMO

- 2. Pension—If defined contribution plan is discontinued, ACT may
 immediately request collective bargaining on the subject.

 Memo of Understanding--4.5% of gross salary will be
 deposited into teacher's account through
 December 31, 2016.

ARTICLE XII *Salaries*

- 1. Salary increase for 2015-2016 will be \$1,350. Please see Salary
 Scales.

- 1a. Starting Salary
 2015-2016--\$39,300

- 4. Department Head Stipend
 2015-2016 school year--\$2,750

- 5. TV Directors Stipend
 2015-2016 school year--\$1,650

- 5a. Computer Resource Person Stipend
 2015-2016 school year--\$1,850

SAINTS JOHN NEUMANN AND MARIA GORETTI: A TURNAROUND SCHOOL

Over the past few weeks, there has been quite a bit of talk about changes going on at Saints John Neumann and Maria Goretti High School. Rather than let the rumors continue and build, I feel that it would be beneficial to put the facts out there about the "Transformational School" being proposed for Neumann-Goretti.

The Association was brought into the Neumann-Goretti discussion rather late, somewhere around May 7. The basic plan had already been drawn up by an outside organization and pretty much agreed to by the System. The plan was to make Neumann-Goretti a "turnaround school" with the outside group providing the capital with which to make this happen. The capital was \$2 million over three years. To get the \$2 million, there was a "requirement" that "specific sections of the teacher contract" needed to be "suspended."

These "specific sections" mandated for suspension included 25 Articles and Sections of the Labor-Management Agreement. Of tremendous concern to the Association were the following: 1) all current staff members would need to be interviewed to determine "suitability." "Teachers deemed unsuitable will be involuntarily transferred." 2) "administration will conduct an annual review for each teacher to determine retention." If the teacher was not to be retained, there could be no grievance concerning just cause for termination. 3) tenured teachers would no longer possess tenure and new teachers would not be able to become tenured 4) if teaching positions needed to be cut because of declining enrollment, the administration could cut anyone it chose.

The Association's Executive Board discussed the contractual mandates at length and on May 14, the Board unanimously approved a Position Paper on the Neumann-Goretti situation. The Board Members had no problem modifying certain work rules; however, the Association "cannot and will not suspend any articles or sections of the Labor-Management Agreement" that would cause "a serious undermining of the principles of social justice." The Association can do nothing "as long as

NEUMANN-GORETTI. . . (continued from Page 4)

the teachers' rights to due process, job security and equitable working conditions are being threatened."

During a meeting at the offices of the Archdiocesan attorney on May 20, the Association was told that the teachers at Neumann-Goretti would "have rights within the System, just not rights within the school." Any negotiation of these mandates was not possible. Besides, we were told, "it is only 22 people."

The plan for the "turnaround school" was presented to the faculty of Neumann-Goretti on June 2. It was, to say the least, a negative and punitive presentation and it was not received well. ACT made it very clear to the teachers that we were holding firm on the clauses involving teachers' rights to due process, job security and tenure. These were not negotiable issues for us. In no way would the Association disenfranchise any member.

As the time for the signing of a Memorandum drew closer, ACT was threatened that Neumann-Goretti would be taken out of the Labor-Management Agreement. It was even stated that the Union, itself, might no longer be recognized.

Finally, on June 9, during a lengthy phone conversation, a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the "turnaround" at Neumann-Goretti was hammered out. The Memorandum was substantially different from the one first mandated for the "turnaround school" and the receiving of the \$2 million.

The Memorandum gave teachers who did not wish to remain at Neumann-Goretti the ability to voluntarily constrict themselves. The Memo contained a few modifications of the work rules, as well. However, and most importantly, "all other provisions of the current collective bargaining agreement and future collective bargaining agreements will remain in full force and effect . . ." Due Process, Job Security and Tenure "remain in full force and effect."

10 out of the 22 faculty members chose to voluntarily constrict themselves. One teacher already had been constricted.

NEUMANN-GORETTI. . . (continued from Page 5)

On June 18, in a letter to the Neumann-Goretti Community, the school administration chose to convey to the parents that a number of teachers were leaving. They made it sound as if the teachers were refusing to accept "redefined expectations," and an elevated "rigor of our academic programs." Those who remained and new faculty yet to be hired "have all committed to meeting the new academic and cultural changes. . ."

On June 19, 2015, I wrote to the President and Principal of Saints John Neumann and Maria Goretti High School. "I truly believe that you have mischaracterized why the members of the faculty chose to work elsewhere. Their decision had very little to do with 'refined expectations for teachers.' It had everything to do with the punitive and extremely negative presentation of life under the transformational model that the administration put forth at the June 2 meeting." ". . .defaming the faculty, many of whom are highly esteemed by both students and parents, is an extremely poor way to begin a transformation."

The Association certainly hopes and prays that the transformational model works well at Saints John Neumann and Maria Goretti High School. As you may imagine, ACT will be monitoring the progress of the "turnaround" closely throughout the school year.



CONSTRICTION 2015

Constriction 2015 was actually handled a bit differently.. Thankfully, the number of positions affected was much fewer than usual. Only 4 positions were actually constricted. 3 of the 4 teachers involved moved into openings in their own schools. The 10 teachers who voluntarily constricted themselves from Neumann-Goretti joined the one remaining constrictor who also happened to be from Neumann-Goretti. 4 administrators returned to the bargaining unit. 2 moved into openings and 2 bumped teachers in their schools with lower seniority. In all, 16 teachers were affected. All were able to select permanent positions.





More Notes of Thanks!

From: John J. Reilly Scholarship Award Winners

“Each year, the Association’s Executive Board awards a \$500 Scholarship to the 9th grader in each Archdiocesan high school and at Holy Cross Academy, Delran, New Jersey who has the highest general average as of the end of the first semester. If that student is already on scholarship, it is given to the highest student not receiving financial assistance. The \$500 Scholarship is sent to each school to be applied to the student’s 10th grade tuition.”

Dear Rita and Irene,

Today, May 5, 2015, at our Underclass Honors Convocation, we presented the Association of Catholic Teachers’ Scholarship to freshman, Alyssa Sliwa. Her academic record is stellar, but we cannot dismiss that she is also a young woman of great character. She was very deserving of this honor. We thought it was very fitting to present this prestigious and generous award at our convocation with her peers on hand.

I want to personally thank ACT for this scholarship. It reinforces our joint commitment to Catholic education and most importantly, to the children of God, the students we serve daily. Again, thank you for this award for Alyssa and for your work for our students. May God bless you today and every day.

Gratefully,

*James D. Meredith
Principal
Archbishop Ryan High School*

(Continued on Page 8)

Dear Ms. Schwartz:

I want to thank you for the Association of Catholic Teachers awards scholarship. I am honored and proud to have been chosen for this award. The \$500.00 scholarship is truly appreciated by my parents and me. We really believe in the benefits of a Catholic education and this award helps in continuing this. I am a conscientious student who takes pride in working hard in all that I do.

Sincerely,
Chloe Manzi
St. Hubert High School for
Girls

Association of Catholic Teachers,

This thank you is late. I want to say how nice it was for our son to receive \$500 in 2012 towards his sophomore year at Archbishop Wood. He has enjoyed being at Wood and has done very well there.

Sincerely,
Christina and Patrick
Kearney and family

Congratulations!

On May 16, 2015, Rita C. Schwartz was inducted into the Libris Society of her alma mater, Chestnut Hill College. The Libris Society was formed to recognize graduates of Chestnut Hill College who have distinguished themselves in their personal and professional lives while exemplifying the College motto of *Fides-Caritas-Scientia*.

The Society name derives from the open book, a medieval heraldic symbol of learning, that displays the college motto of *Fides-Caritas-Scientia* (Faith-Charity-Knowledge) on the official seal of Chestnut Hill College.

As its reasons for nominating Rita for this prestigious award, the College stated that "*Rita C. Schwartz '63 is a strong believer in, and advocate of, the power of a Catholic education, having graduated from Chestnut Hill College armed with a strong sense of self and social justice.*"



Rita receiving her honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

Among Rita's other awards, she received the Lifetime Commitment Award from Holy Family University in 2013 and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Chestnut Hill College in 2014.

Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to
Holy Cross Academy (Delran, NJ)

Happy Summer to Everyone!

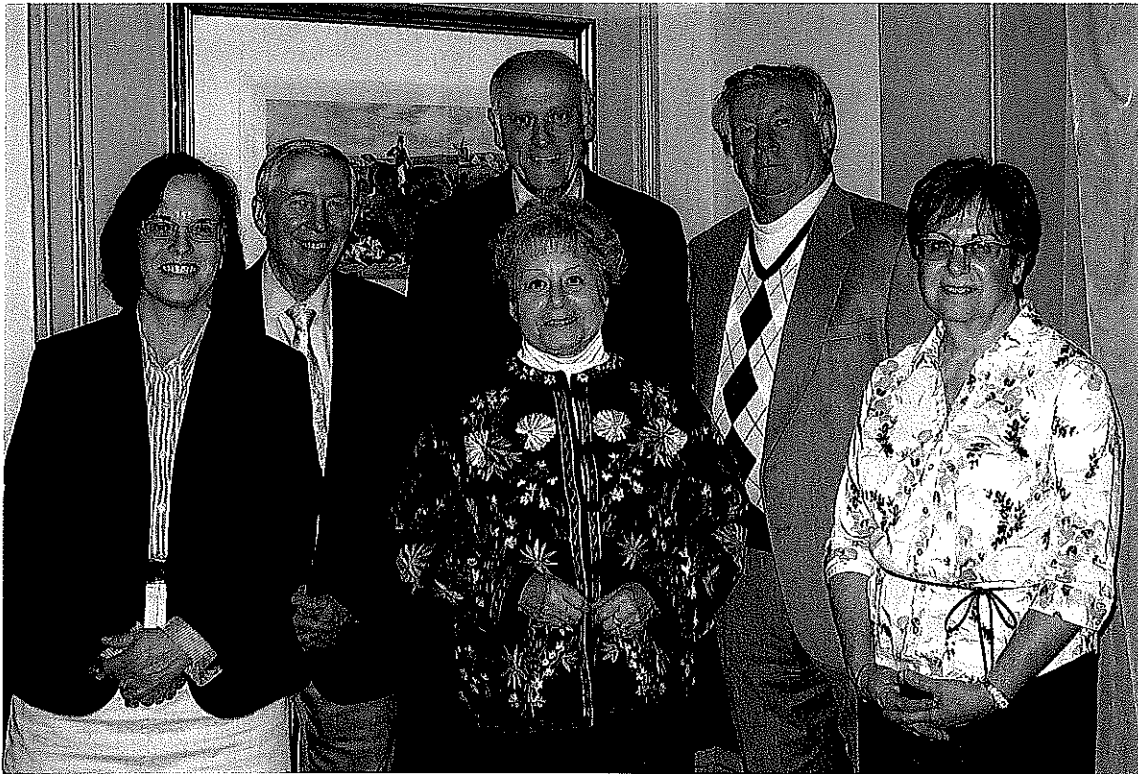


Rita Schwartz with Holy Cross retirees Paul Moynahan, Pam Tosto, Jeff Moloney and Rich Matwiejecz.

Congratulations!



Congratulations to Peg Goldschmidt, who was inducted into the John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School Hall of Fame. Peg is a proud graduate of the Class of 1977 and has been a teacher at Hallahan since 1989.



Rita Schwartz with Gold and Silver Celebrants Judy Owens (Silver, Carroll), Joe Schuler (Gold, Conwell-Egan), Barry Kirsch (Gold, Carroll), Whitey Sullivan (Gold, Fr. Judge) and Nancy Legradi (Silver, Roman Catholic).

IMPORTANT SUMMER INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: The ACT Office will operate on a summer schedule beginning Monday, June 15, 2015. The hours of operation will be Monday through Friday, 9:30 to 3:30.

ADDRESS CHANGES -- If you are in the process of moving, or have already moved to a new address, don't forget to call the ACT Office with your new address and phone number. You can also visit the ACT Webpage and log-on to your personal page to update your information.

IF YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED, OR WILL CHANGE OVER THE SUMMER, PLEASE NOTIFY THE ACT OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SINCE THIS WILL BE THE MODE OF COMMUNICATION OVER THE SUMMER HIATUS.

VOLUNTARY VISION PLAN-- Benefits went into effect on January 1, 2015 for teachers who signed up for the Davis Vision Plan. You should have received a new vision card. The correct vision card for the current plan year, January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, begins with the prefix YXF. If you have a Davis Vision card that begins with QCB, please destroy it.

MEDICAL CARDS – Teachers should have received new medical cards in November. If you did not receive a new card, or if you are in need of additional medical cards, please call Claudia Bonde at the Office of Catholic Education at 215-587-4520.

DENTAL CARDS – If you are in need of a new dental card, call the ACT Office or email your request to ginny@act1776.com.

RETIREMENT INFORMATION -- The ACT Office has put together some medical information (rates, comparison sheets and contract provisions) for teachers who are considering retirement in the near future. If you are considering an early retirement or if you will be reaching the age for normal retirement, call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 for your retirement packet. You may also email your request to ginny@act1776.com.

FREEDOM CREDIT UNION – The Freedom Credit Union offers teachers and their families a wide range of financial opportunities. For more information visit the credit union's website at www.freedomcu.org. The phone number for the Freedom Credit Union is 215-612-5900.

MOVIE TICKETS – The ACT Office keeps a limited supply of movie tickets on hand for teachers to purchase at a discounted rate. We have REGAL/UNITED ARTISTS and AMC Tickets Available. Currently the cost is \$8.00 per ticket for both theaters. However, I have been notified that the cost will go up with my next order. If you are interested in purchasing tickets, please call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 to check price and availability.

BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE AND RELAXING SUMMER

CONTACT US AT
ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS, 1700 SANSOM STREET – SUITE 903,
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103, 215-568-4175
www.act1776.com or nacst.nacst@verizon.net